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RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 0031

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAKAR 000617

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DEPT FOR NEA, AF/W, AF/RSA AND INR/AA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [KPAL](#) [IR](#) [SG](#)

SUBJECT: NEA DAS GRAY MEETS FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY  
GENERAL DIALLO

Classified By: DCM ROBERT P. JACKSON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

#### SUMMARY

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¶1. (C) Summary: During a March 14, 2007 meeting, Senegalese Foreign Ministry Secretary General Claude Absa Diallo and NEA DAS Gordon Gray discussed Senegal's hosting of the next Organization of Islamic Conferences (OIC) Summit, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iran. Ambassador Diallo urged the U.S. and Israel to engage more with the Palestinians. For his part, Gray made it clear that Iran needs to halt its nuclear program. END SUMMARY.

#### IRAN

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¶2. (C) Underlining that the United States has always differentiated between the Government and the people of Iran, Gray emphasized that the U.S. has been using public diplomacy tools to broaden its outreach to the Iranian people. He continued that there is broad international support to force Iran to halt its nuclear program. He encouraged Senegal to do what it could in this regard. Highlighting Senegal's friendly relations with Iran, Ambassador Diallo said that an international crisis would not be conducive as Senegal believes that the more the world threatens Iran the more obstinate it, especially President Ahmadinejad, will become. She urged patience to try to moderate Iran's position. Gray pointed out that the longer the international community waits the more likely it will be that Iran will acquire an arsenal of nuclear weapons.

#### ISRAEL-PALESTINE

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¶3. (C) Both agreed that solving the Israel-Palestinian problem will go a long way in easing regional tensions. Describing Israel's attitude as sometimes unhelpful, Diallo then said that hard-line Israeli policies had created the vacuum into which Hamas had entered and that at this stage it was crucial for Israel to release tax revenues so that the unity government could function. She added that to isolate Hamas would lead them further away from the path of moderation. Gray countered that the United States does not want to penalize the Palestinian people for voting for Hamas and in fact has provided significant humanitarian aid through the Presidency. At the same time, Hamas must accept the Quartet principles by renouncing violence, recognizing Israel's right to exist, and accepting previous agreements. He recognized the crucial role that Senegal, a moderate Muslim country that has diplomatic relations with Israel, could play in making sure that Israel does not become isolated.

OIC

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¶4. (C) Diallo confirmed that the next OIC summit will be held in Dakar sometime in March 2008. While, neither the dates nor the agenda have been confirmed, she revealed that President Wade is anxious to promote moderate Islam and inter-faith dialogue as themes and that he continues to consider a global Muslim-Christian conference as adjunct to the OIC meeting. Gray welcomed themes that could decouple Islam with its image of terror.

#### OTHER MEETINGS

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¶5. (U) In addition to the meeting with Ambassador Diallo and the MFA Directors for Africa and for International Organizations, DAS Gray had a very lively discussion with the Algerian, Egyptian, Moroccan, and Tunisian Ambassadors about terrorism and democracy; met with Ambassador Ahmed Khalifa Niasse, who was until recently President Wade's Itinerant Ambassador for the Middle East; and his brother, Sidy Lamine Niasse, who editor-in-chief of Walfadjri, an independent, pro-Arab, pro-Islamic daily.

¶6. (U) This cable has been cleared by NEA DAS Gray.

¶7. (U) Visit Embassy Dakar, SIPRNET website at <http://www.state.gov/p/af/dakar>.  
JACOBS